

MINUTES
MID-YEAR BUDGET REVIEW
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
LINCOLN MUNICIPAL AIRPORT BOARD ROOM
2400 W ADAMS
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1999
AFTERNOON SESSION

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair
Larry Hudkins
Linda Steinman
Bob Workman
Bernie Heier

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

AGENDA ITEM

**1 DISCUSSION OF LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - Gordon Kissel,
Legislative Consultant**

Gordon Kissel, Legislative Consultant, presented a brief legislative update (Exhibit A), noting the following:

- Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney, will testify in support of LB 872, which changes in forma pauperis payment provisions. Opposition is expected from Senator Chambers who perceives the bill as a rights, rather than a cost issue.
- Lack of criteria for determining indigency and mental health status and the precedent setting nature of the bill remain concerns with regards to LB 24, which provides for an appointment of counsel in certain divorce proceedings.
- Authority to remove junked cars from private land is not addressed in LB 90, which changes provisions relating to abandoned motor vehicles.

Kissel also reviewed Governor Johanns's tax plan, noting a cash rebate on property taxes is proposed, based on a budget growth factor. He stated the Governor supports education funding, but not under the current distribution formula.

Hudkins noted concerns that initial funding of the Governor's proposal would be achieved by tapping into the Reserve Fund.

In response to a question from Steinman, Kissel predicted that passage of LB 512, which changes placement and transportation cost provisions for juveniles, will be difficult.

Steinman inquired about LB 392, which authorizes local governments to levy payments in lieu of taxes for certain tax exempt real property, noting concern that County Boards will be required to make a determination on whether to impose the payments. Kissel noted that educational and religious organizations are exempted under the bill.

Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, reported the Douglas County Bond Counsel is concerned that LB 141, which changes provisions relating to levy limits, fund distributions and taxation of motor vehicles, will restrict the levy of funds for building purposes. He suggested consultation with Bill Lock, Research Analyst for the Legislature's Revenue Committee, and Bill Giovanni, Ameritas Investment Corporation, on the bill's ramifications.

Hudkins inquired about homestead exemption bills, noting that rural county representatives at the Area 5 Agricultural & Horticultural Land Valuation Board meeting agreed to look at setting a proportional value in urban counties for homestead exemption uniformity.

Additional legislative concerns noted were:

- LB 401, which changes provisions relating to county zoning regulations
- LB 435, which provides commitment procedures for sexually violent offenders under the Nebraska Mental Health Commitment Act
- LB 628, which requires provision of copies of public records at actual costs
- LB 818, which provides for criminal history record information checks on child and certain adult care providers
- Homestead exemption bills, which include LB 139, LB 145, LB 179, LB 180, LB 301, LB 330, LB 429, LB 492, LB 745, LB 766, and LB 826

Kissel agreed to follow up on those bills, in addition to LB 141, which changes provisions relating to levy limits, fund distributions and taxation of motor vehicles; LB 253, which changes dollar limitations for public improvement project requirements and LB 296, which changes dollar limitations for public improvement project requirements. A written legislative update will be submitted to the Board prior to the County Board Staff Meeting scheduled for 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, February 9th.

2 LONG-TERM BUILDING NEEDS - Don Killeen, County Property Manager

Don Killeen, County Property Manager, reported that completion of the Hall of Justice and Law Enforcement Center will leave the Old Federal Building, Police Station and Trabert Hall partially occupied. The Public Building Commission has recommended putting out an Request for Proposals (RFP) on these buildings, to gauge interest, as their operation at less than full capacity will be costly. He indicated that leasing out space in these buildings to achieve a level where income supports their operation or disposing of the buildings and leasing back space are additional options.

Killeen noted that proceeds from the sale of these buildings could be used to complete the third floor of the County-City Building. Information Services could then be located in the building, as originally intended, with additional space on the third floor utilized for County Probation Offices, County Attorney's Child Support Division and other government functions.

Campbell reported the Public Building Commission has also discussed whether the City and County would be willing to allow the proceeds from the sale of these buildings to flow to the Public Building Commission to solve future space needs.

Campbell also reported that the Public Building Commission has proposed leasing "storefront" space to house functions such as the Election Commissioner, Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission and Veterans Services, to prevent individuals seeking those services from having to access the government complex. The space currently occupied by the Election Commissioner's Building could then be converted to needed parking for the government complex.

Brief discussion took place on future plans for Trabert Hall, with a suggestion that the building may be more marketable if combined with the Attention Center building.

Killeen also reported on the parking situation at the government complex, noting that placing a deck on the "H" Street parking lot will add 130 stalls and moving fleet vehicles to a remote site will free up an additional 110 stalls.

MID-YEAR BUDGET REVIEW - (Exhibit A from the morning session)

SECTION 6, LETTERS FROM AGENCIES - Continuation of discussion from the morning session

The Board requested Kroeker to indicate in the budget documents that will be presented at a public hearing on the budget any budgets that are offset by grants or other funding sources.

Community Mental Health Center (063)

Board consensus to accept the adjustment to the expenditures in the amount of \$385,165.

Register of Deeds (604)

Board consensus to approve conversion of the temporary full-time Clerk Typist II position to permanent full-time status, with conversion of the funds currently budgeted for the temporary position, and to hold the request for the full-time permanent Clerk Typist III and System Automation Specialist positions.

County Sheriff (651)

Board consensus to hold the request for an additional full-time civil process deputy and to seek additional information as to whether the request is emergency in nature. It was also suggested that private process servers be utilized to a greater degree to help alleviate the Sheriff Department's workload.

Board consensus to approve the purchase of five laser printers, with a recommendation that the Sheriff include the remaining five laser printers in next year's budget.

Human Services (837)

Board consensus to approve the printing cost request in the amount of \$350, but to hold the request for temporary clerical assistance, indicating a preference that the County Board's Secretary assist with clerical needs.

Kroeker will review the agency requests, gather the information requested by the Board and make his recommendations to the Board at the Thursday, February 18th County Board Staff Meeting.

SECTION 7, FY00 BUDGET GUIDELINES & CALENDAR

The Board requested Kroeker to draft a letter from the Board to all County agencies, requesting that they submit a current level of service budget, with an indication of any mandated services. The letter will include a caution that although the Budget & Fiscal Officer has projected a 7% increase this year, only a 3% increase is projected for next year and the Board will seek ways to narrow that gap. As a result, agencies will be expected to justify any requests for additional staff. Suggestions of ways to operate more cost effectively, such as privatization of services, were also encouraged.

Board also requested Kroeker to draft a budget letter from the Board to the Lancaster County Rural Fire Districts.

Kroeker briefly reviewed the Lancaster County Budget Calendar for Fiscal Year 1999 and Department Budget Hearing Schedule.

Board members agreed to review their individual calendars and discuss the budget calendar further at the February 18th County Board Staff Meeting.

4 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

The Board reviewed a list of 1998 County Board Committee Assignments (Exhibit B) and a summary of each of those committees (Exhibit C).

The following committee assignments were made:

- Air Pollution Advisory Committee - Workman
- Area 5 Agricultural & Horticultural Land Valuation Board - Hudkins, Heier (Alternate)
- Attention Center Advisory Board - Heier
- Board of Corrections - Heier (Chair), Campbell (Vice Chair)
- Board of Equalization - Campbell (Chair - By Virtue of Office), Hudkins (Vice Chair - By Virtue of Office)
- Board of Health - Hudkins
- Budget Monitoring Committee - Campbell, Heier
- City-County Common - All Commissioners (Steinman will serve as Vice Chair of the Common)
- Community Mental Health Advisory Executive Committee - Steinman
- District Energy Corporation - Hudkins, Heier
- Ecological Advisory Committee - Heier
- Emergency Management Advisory Council - Workman
- General Assistance Monitoring Committee - Campbell, Steinman
- Government Access & Information Committee - Steinman
- Growth on the Fringe Committee - Campbell

Committee Assignments Continued:

- Information Systems Policy Committee - Steinman, Workman
- Joint Budget Committee - Campbell, Steinman
- Keno Prevention Advisory Committee - Steinman
- Lancaster County Leasing Corporation - Campbell (Chair - By Virtue of Office), Hudkins (Vice Chair - By Virtue of Office)
- Lancaster Manor Advisory Committee - Workman
- Lincoln Independent Business Association Budget Monitoring Committee - Hudkins, Steinman
- Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development - Campbell (By Virtue of Office)
- Master Plan Steering Committee - Hudkins
- Nebraska Association of County Officials Board - Hudkins
- Officials Committee - Campbell (Chair - By Virtue of Office), Hudkins (Vice Chair - By Virtue of Office)
- Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee - Workman
- Public Building Commission - Campbell, Hudkins
- Railroad Transportation Safety District - Steinman, Heier, Workman
- Region V - Steinman
- Weed Control Advisory Committee - Workman
- Wilderness Park Mediation Task Force - Heier
- Visitors Promotion Advisory Committee - Steinman

It was noted that the Chairman of the Joint Budget Committee serves on the Funders Group.

The Board requested that the County Clerk's Office distribute copies of minutes of the Area 5 Agricultural & Horticultural Land Valuation Board to all Board members.

The Board also requested Eagan to send a letter to all of the Board's standing committees notifying them of Board representation and requesting that minutes be provided to each Board member.

5 GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Board reviewed the Goals for 1998 and Long-Range Strategic Planning (Commissioners' Information Packet), noting the following:

Goals for 1999 and Long-Range Strategic Planning

41. Develop a schedule of work sessions on rural land use issues
42. Determine plans for Trabert Hall and proceeds from the sale of the St. Francis Chapel and property on the South Street Campus
43. Follow up on the recommendations of the LB 1085 Committee and other issues for restructuring County government
44. Continue to look at privatization and cost based accounting, through the study with the Heritage Center; and complete Director job description analysis (Copies to be maintained in the office of Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer)
45. Continue development of a long-range plan for the Attention Center; including construction and financing of a new juvenile detention facility
46. Continue strategic planning with regards to the Wilderness Park Study, with its four major components:
 - Ecology
 - Transportation
 - Storm Water (Hydrology)
 - Process Mediation
7. Develop structure for the Management Team meetings, appointing a Management Team sub-committee to gather ideas for discussion topics
8. Continue discussion on need for a Court Administrator
9. Long-term planning for the Corrections Department
10. Rewrite the working agreement between the City, County and United Way for human services
11. Develop a public relations strategy
12. Develop a long-term telecommunications strategy for Lancaster County
13. Develop a uniform address system in Lancaster County

Annual Goals

1. Complete rules and policies of the County Board
2. Meet annually with the Village Clerks
3. Review goals semi-annually at budget time
4. Encourage semi-annual meetings with Douglas and Sarpy counties
5. Develop Geographic Information System map for the County's real estate
6. Update the microcomputer policy
7. Develop a legislative agenda by November 1st

The Board decided to proceed with development of a rural land use policy and scheduling of work sessions with representatives of the Planning Department, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District; Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, County Engineer, Nebraska Department of Roads and the County Sheriff's Office.

Campbell agreed to contact the Planning Commission Chair to explain it is the Board's intent to move forward on development of a rural land use policy.

The Board also requested an opinion from the County Attorney as to whether home owner association covenants can be used to address the junked car issue in the County.

Campbell, Hudkins and Eagan will meet to develop a schedule for the Board to visit County agencies and for educational sessions and will report back to the Board.

6 OTHER BUSINESS

Campbell reported that she had received a communication from Gwen Thorpe, Deputy County Clerk, seeking information with regards to the Board's expectations of the County Clerk's staff.

Campbell noted that she will be meeting with Thorpe on Friday, February 5th and will discuss having the County Clerk's staff cover committee meetings of the Board that are not related to specific agencies.

7 ADJOURNMENT

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

Bruce Medcalf
Lancaster County Clerk